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Of the Manners of Speaking That the Old Ones Had: The Metaphors of Andres de Olmos in the TULAL Manuscript, "Arte para Aprender la Lengua Mexicana," 1547 by Judith M. Maxwell; Craig A. Hanson

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*International Journal of American Linguistics*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (Jul., 1998), pp. 292-298

Published by: [The University of Chicago Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1265687>

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*Mikmaq Hieroglyphic Prayers: Readings in North America's First Indigenous Script.* By David L. Schmidt and Murdena Marshall. Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 1995.

Most of this book consists of facsimiles of religious documents with interlinear Mikmaq and English, but the "Introduction" contains a state-of-the-art history and description of the hieroglyphics, including some new information, which seems to prove that the hieroglyphics were at one time a true writing system. It certainly makes clear the fundamental role the characters play and have played in preserving identity. Like Cree and Inuit syllabics, after a missionary introduced the system (in this case in the seventeenth century), because it so suited the language and lifestyle, it spread on its own over great distances (pp. 6–7). Some secular uses of the system from the eighteenth century are documented (pp. 11–12). In 1843, Nova Scotia's Indian Commissioner encountered resistance to learning any script but the hieroglyphs and noted that the manuscripts were carefully preserved and constantly referred to (p. 13).

"Native Writing Systems." By Willard B. Walker. *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 17, *Languages*, ed. Ives Goddard, pp. 158–84. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1996.

A good overview of many systems in the United States and Canada, especially the older, prephonemic ones which are the most interesting. There is much useful detail. The article was first submitted in 1974 and was updated, but some of the information still reflects the early 1970s. For example, the situation that among the Inuit in the Canadian eastern Arctic syllabic "literacy has never been supported by the schools" (p. 180) is now dramatically reversed.

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OF THE MANNERS OF SPEAKING THAT THE OLD ONES HAD: THE METAPHORS OF ANDRES DE OLMOS IN THE TULAL MANUSCRIPT, *ARTE PARA APRENDER LA LENGUA MEXICANA*, 1547. By Judith M. Maxwell and Craig A. Hanson. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1992. Pp. ix + 438.

I should warn the reader at the outset that I think this book is a travesty of scholarship in American Indian linguistics and a caricature of Nahuatl studies. It fails both overall and in detail and shows an ignorance of Classical Nahuatl morphology and syntax and an incomprehension of textual values. Apparently intending to write a work of scholarship, Maxwell and Hanson (henceforth M&H) have produced a book of imaginative writing in a scholarly style and format. Unlike fiction, however, it unfortunately claims its figments are the truth.

The book purports to be a presentation of chapter 8 of Fray Andres de Olmos's Nahuatl grammar. M&H give an introductory discussion of Olmos, his grammar, and chapter 8, followed by three appendixes: one about the Tulane University Latin American Library (TULAL) manuscript, one listing "conventional" metaphors in the manuscript (henceforth MS), and one about problems of orthography. This is followed by a "Bibliography." They then give a photographic reproduction of the MS's version of chapter 8 (pp. 56–69), followed by "Literal Translations" (pp. 75–134), "Lexical and Grammatical Annotations" (pp. 135–67), "Literary Interpretations" (pp. 169–87), "Computer Processing of the Olmos Text" by Walter R. T. Witschey (pp. 189–90), "Nahuatl–English Morpheme Concordance" by Maxwell, Hanson, and Witschey (pp. 191–313), and finally "English–Nahuatl Morpheme Concordance" by the same three (pp. 315–438).

M&H show bad judgment from the first sentence of the first page. They speak of the Metaphors (with a capital M) of the *Arte*. That is, they deliberately change the title of the chapter. They confess on page 19 that "the word *metáfora* does not appear in the manuscript . . . [although Olmos does say] that these 'manners of speaking' are 'metaphorical.'" By replacing his adjective with their noun they reject Olmos's focus, which is on *maneras de hablar*.

This rejection invalidates M&H's translational enterprise from the start. They fail to understand Olmos's purpose for including this chapter in his grammar. As a grammarian, he is doing what in his day a grammarian of Latin might do: include a section on rhetoric in the form of sentences or brief selections after dealing with the rules of orthography, morphology, and syntax. In chapter 8, he presents his selected *maneras de hablar* by giving entries in a vocabulary-like collection (with the entry-heads being sentences, phrases, and in one instance a single word). Since the Nahuatl that appears in the entry is a translation of the Spanish entry-head, he sees no need to give a close translation of it. While to a modern reader this may not seem good pedagogy, it is simply the traditional technique.

M&H are unable to see what Olmos is doing. By misunderstanding Olmos's adjective *metáforicas*, M&H mistakenly assume that he is into Literature. From this they arrive at their operational theory: each Spanish-headed segment is a Nahuatl poem.

They do not use the word "poem" until page 24, but its influence is evident earlier on. (1) On page 19: "It is the metaphorical nature that gives spice to these passages." (2) On page 20: "'Metaphors' are the paragraphs of the Olmos manuscript. Each paragraph is designated a unit . . . by a Spanish subtitle. . . ." (3) On page 22, in regard to "Metaphor XXXI, Godly Calm": "the tropes are laid out carefully. . . . The Metaphor progresses by reference to five actions of god: he spreads warmth, flowers, petals, happiness, and calm. . . . The paragraph is a tightly knit construction with linked metaphors, progressing through seriated images and concluding chiasmically." Setting aside for the present the fact that the Nahuatl text does not mention any "actions of god" and that M&H have totally mistranslated the Nahuatl, this makes it evident that they are focusing on artistic skill. (4) On page 24 this becomes explicit: "Part of the artistry of the Olmos Metaphors, however, is in the activation of the etymological/derivational basis of many couplets [the usual term is "doublet"]. . . . The author often wants several images superimposed to lend irony,

tension, and depth to the composition.” (5) Finally, on page 24, in describing “Metaphor VIII,” they make explicit what has been implicit to this point: “The piece of jewelry created by the poem thus far is *iˆo:tlachialtiloc* ‘awaited.’ [Wrong! The Nahuatl here means ‘who is made to look (like a golden bead)’.]

The subsection “Artistry and Tension” (p. 29) begins: “These Metaphors are individually crafted and meticulously arranged.” And a sentence later: “The message seems independent and clear, though carefully protected by layered imagery and an accessible, non-controversial surface interpretation.” For all this insistence on Metaphors and metaphors there is not a single mention in the “Bibliography” of any works dealing with metaphors, and what is more, the book includes no study or analysis of the metaphors in Olmos’s entries. The absence of such a study is a blessing, since it is abundantly clear throughout the book that M&H do not understand them.

M&H’s bad judgment about these *maneras de hablar* being poems finds its culmination and fulfillment in the chapter called “The Metaphors: Literary Interpretations.” There they totally reject Olmos’s conception and replace it with their own. First, they replace his entry-head with a title that would be appropriate to a poem: for example, *Hacer misericordia la persona o el señor, o hacer limosna o consolar al afligido* [‘For a personage or a lord to do an act of mercy, or to give alms or console someone in distress’ (p. 85)] becomes “Wake” (p. 172); *Anda hecho bellaco siguiendo el camino de los animales, desatinado o sin sentido* [‘He goes about having become wicked, acting like an animal, foolish and unthinking’ (p. 107)] becomes “Feral” (p. 179).

Having scrapped the Spanish text, M&H proceed to destroy the Nahuatl text by forcing their “literary interpretations” upon it, casting them in poem formats. A sampling can only hint at how bad they are. (In these examples, the lines of the “poems” are numbered and my translation of the Nahuatl is given in square brackets.)

On page 180 we have the “interpretation” of the “Metaphor XXXI, Godly Calm,” which M&H showcased on page 22. The literal translation is on page 112, where they render the entry-head *Está limpio y aparejado para dios el corazón del buen cristiano* [‘The heart of the good Christian is clean and fit for God’] as “It is clean and smooth for god the heart of the good christian.”

Line 1: Awe suffuses, spring spreads and calms [‘Everything continually stands worthy of awe. Everything becomes freshly green; everything continually stands as in springtime’.]

Line 2: from within his flower house. [‘On the inside of God’s garden’]

Line 3: God spreads warmth, strews flowers [‘everything stands luxuriant; everything stands graced by flowers’,]

Line 4: he scatters with abandon, happily, peacefully. [‘everything continually stands in profusion. Everything stands happily; everything stands peacefully’.]

M&H invent. Where M&H do not understand, they back up their invention with pseudo-grammar, as in the “Annotation” on page 158, when in discussing *tlaxo-pammamani* they say, “The incorporation of *tlaxo:pan* ‘spring’ into the intransitive

verb *mani* reflects a rare syntactic option. Generally nouns are incorporated into object not subject positions.” First, the *tla* does not belong to *xōpan*; it is an impersonalizing prefix (so the verb-form requires an impersonal subject). Second, the alleged option is not “rare,” it is nonexistent: a subject can NEVER be incorporated inside the boundaries of a Nahuatl predicate. *Xōpan* here is an incorporated adverb equivalent to ‘as in springtime’.

For another example: on page 182 M&H give their “literary interpretation” of the so-called “Metaphor XXXVII, Accession,” which they commented on briefly on page 23. The literal translation is on page 119, where they render the entry-head *Pónese señor de nuevo* as “He sets himself as ruler again.” This should read ‘He becomes a newly installed lord’ (*de nuevo* is not an adverbial modifier here but an adjectival one, ‘new’, ‘new-made’).

Line 1: He had revealed himself on the mat, there on the throne. [‘The mat and the chair (i.e., the position of authority) acquire a heart’;]

Line 2: He makes himself head of the town, [‘the water-and-hill [i.e., the city] acquires a head’.]

Line 3: he blazes, he shines over the water, the hill, the town. [‘The water-and-hill (i.e., the city) blossoms and blooms’.]

Although translation is never the translation of a text but rather a translation of an interpretation of a text (so that “interpretation” is a synonym for “translation”), the aim of responsible translation is to reduce as much as possible the inevitable distortion introduced by the interpreting self. That is, the aim is to seek fidelity to the meaning of the text, listening to it with tact and respect. It would seem, however, that by labeling these translations “interpretations” and furthermore weighting that label with “literary,” M&H are confessing that they do not intend to honor that aim. The result is intellectually useless.

As indicated above, M&H display only a limited knowledge of Nahuatl and the inexperience with Nahuatl texts is everywhere obvious. In linguistic and textual matters they are naive, unthinking, and unknowing. Every page is rife with errors, only a few of which can be mentioned here.

M&H present the “Literal Translations” in a four-line format: (1) a transcription; (2) a “morphemic” analysis; (3) a “morpheme”-by-“morpheme” gloss; (4) a literal rendition of the sense of the line. In practically every instance (except for one-syllable particles) their line 2 “morpheme” analyses are wrong; for example, even a simple item such as *qualli* (p. 128) is misrepresented as *CUAL-li*, a mistaken analysis because the *-li* is not a morpheme but an allomorph of */-tl/*; nor is *CUAL-* a single morpheme.

Similarly, on page 105 the MS gives *aquitla/çotlac*, for which M&H offer the wrong “morpheme” analysis *AQUI-TLA+ZOH-tla-c*, glossed as *ENTER-LOVE-tr-pt* and translated as “he entered loving.” This compound is impossible in Nahuatl. M&H do not recognize the negative prefix *AH-* and the third-person singular object pronoun *QUI-*. The analysis yields “he did not love it.” The MS for this (respelled) is: *Ōmotlapāpalōchīuh. Ahquitlazohltlac in iēlchiquiuh, in itzontecon.* [‘He became a fire-moth. He did not love his chest or his head’—i.e., he did not

value his life . . . because he put himself in mortal danger like a moth attracted by fire.] In their “literary interpretation” of this, on page 178, M&H offer: “As the butterfly becomes the flame, he lovingly metamorphoses into a rib cage, into a skull.” Here M&H do not understand the difference between subject and predicate (as in the first sentence) and do not know the difference between a supplement and a modifier (as in the second sentence).

For M&H scribal error is apparently unthinkable even when they indicate in a footnote that other manuscripts have another reading, in fact the correct one. They analyze an erroneous form and give its invented “morphemes” invented glosses; e.g., on page 130 the form *aalaua* is analyzed as *A:-ALA:HUA*, glossed as *WATER-ANOINT*, and translated as “he anoints” (which, if the glosses were correct, would have to be “he anoints water”). Two manuscripts agree that the form should be *tlaa-laua*, which is obviously correct, confirmed by the following context, *tlapetzcaui tlaxolaua*. In the footnote M&H admit that the *tlaa-laua* is a preferred reading, but are unaware that these three forms are *tla*-impersonals built on intransitive stems. They mistranslate the footnote item *tlaa-laua* as “he anoints something.” It means ‘everything becomes slippery’. And they translate *tlaxolaua* as “he slides something (it also means ‘everything becomes slippery’)”. M&H never recognize *tla*-impersonal forms.

M&H do not even take advantage of information right before them to solve a difficulty. This is seen even in the very first Nahuatl sentence of the MS, which M&H transcribe as *Nican no con* [the MS has *nocon*] *tlapoua. intop/tli in petlacalli* [not that it is significant, but the MS has *intop/tli inpetlacalli*]. They say *no* is an adverb meaning “also,” but here it is not an adverb. They analyze their *con tlapoua* as *c-on-tla-PO:HUA*, which they gloss as *3o-dir-3io-READ* and translate as “he reads it out.” Everything here is in error except for glossing *-on-* as a directional (but the translation “out” is wrong). *Tla-* is not an indefinite object; the verb permits only one object. Also, the verb stem is not *-PO:HUA*. On page 135 in the “Annotation” section they cite Karttunen (1983:292) to back up their analysis. They do not realize that the information she gives offers the correct analysis. If they had read her correctly, they would have seen that their *tla-PO:HUA* is intransitive (because of *tla*-fusion), so the *-c-*, ‘it’, of *con* cannot possibly be its verb object, and that what is needed here is the transitive verb *tla-tlapoa*, ‘to open something’, which Karttunen mentions as a contrasting stem.

Not only do they ignore Karttunen, they also ignore Olmos. His translation is: “I open and uncover [it].” But here as everywhere else they dismiss him as if what he says is not relevant. If they had paid attention here, they would have known that *no* is not /no:/, ‘also’, but the first-person singular subject pronoun morpheme /n-/, ‘I’ (which, in the morphemic sequence /n-k-on-/, shows up as the morphic sequence [n-k-on-], information easily available in Andrews 1975:44).

Having mistranslated *nocontlapoa*, they go on to mistranslate *in tōptli in petlacalli* as “the idol the woven structure.” While it is true that one translational possibility for *tōptli* is ‘idol’, it never has that value in this doublet, especially here, where *in tōptli in petlacalli* functions as the supplementary object of the basic object *-c-* of *nocontlapoa*, which requires that both members of the doublet represent things that can be opened: *tōptli* means ‘sheathlike case’ or ‘enveloping cover’; *petlacalli* means ‘wickerwork chest’. That is, both signify containers that protectively

conceal their contents. And since what is inside cannot be seen or known, the doublet *tōptli petlacalli* is usually taken as a container-for-contents metonymy for ‘the hidden, the obscure, the mysterious, the unknown, the esoteric’. Olmos translates it as “el corazon,” i.e., ‘my heart’, choosing to represent it as the metaphorical container of hidden thoughts, desires, etc. In the present context it might also be rendered as “rhetorical expressions that contain metaphorical meanings.” M&H, on page 38, in Appendix II, erroneously present *tōptli petlacalli*, saying: “‘idol bundle, coffer.’ This metaphor is a fossilized reference to sacred paraphernalia. The ‘fossil’ nature of this metaphor lent it to importation into Christian contexts, where the actual referents, the wrapped bundle of ritual implements of sacrifice, etc., and the coffer in which it resides would be inappropriate or blasphemous.” Almost every word here is in error, especially the phrases “sacred paraphernalia” and “bundle of ritual implements of sacrifice.” Moreover, M&H show that they do not know that the structure of a doublet is coordinative (the sheathlike case is not contained IN the wickerwork chest).

M&H have problems with Spanish at times equal to those they have with Nahuatl. For example, the entry-head *Castiga dios con mortandad o sentencia el señor o juez a muerte* [‘God punishes with the loss of life, or the lord or judge gives a death sentence’; p. 88] is rendered “God punishes with mortality or sentences the lord or judge to death.” Some of the translations are monstrous; e.g., *Ando afrentado* [‘I go along disgraced’; the last sentence of XVI on page 91] is translated as “you are to donate”; *Cásase aquél o pide* [the MS has *pie*] *o toma mujer* [‘That one marries or requests or takes a wife’; p. 116] is rendered “One marries that one at the foot of or takes a woman”; *Rije bien el señor que puebla bien: honra y adorna su pueblo* [‘The lord who populates well governs well; he honors and adorns his town’; p. 124] becomes “Rules well the lord that people well honor and adorn their town.”

The “Literal Translations,” the “Lexical and Grammatical Annotations,” and the “Literary Interpretations” cover 103 pages. These are followed by the 122 pages of the “Nahuatl–English Morpheme Concordance” and the 123 pages of the “English–Nahuatl Morpheme Concordance.” Since these two sections are based on the “Literal Translations,” they are simply a 245-page-long garbage dump. On page 191, it is not surprising that the very first entry in the Nahuatl–English section is wrong. It is *A:/(BEPRESENT)*, with reference to XXI–7, but the *a* at that place in the MS is the negative prefix *AH-*, here part of *ahōmpa*, ‘not at that place’. On page 315, the very first entry in the English–Nahuatl section is wrong. It is *ABANDON/(CA:UH)*. The reference is to XXII–12 where *CA:HU-i-l-QUI:X-ti-a* is glossed *ABANDON-inst-sf-LEAVE-cs-tr* and translated “he leaves abandoning.” There is no “abandoning” here. The *-c-* is the third-person singular object pronoun ‘it’; the proper translation is ‘he causes it to leave in frivolity’.

While the authors are obviously the ones who are responsible for this fiasco, the University of Utah Press is also guilty. Because of its inadequacy, it has contaminated the field of Nahuatl studies, both in linguistics and in anthropology, with this plague of misinformation hidden by the illusory credence the book gains from being published by a university press and from its deceptive style and professional-seeming format. Obviously, an editor and staff cannot be expected to recognize errors on the scale detailed in this review in a work dealing with an exotic

language, but precisely because the material is unfamiliar, they have a special obligation to seek out competent authorities for advice. This they obviously failed to do. The result is a book so bad that I believe it should be withdrawn from sale and all remaining copies destroyed. I suggest that anyone who has already purchased it—unless he or she wishes to hold onto his/her copy as a curiosity—should ask for a refund.

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AN ONEIDA DICTIONARY/UKWEHU·WEHNEHA TEKAWANATE?NYÉSE. By Amos Christjohn and Maria Hinton. Edited by Clifford Abbott. Oneida, Wis.: Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, 1996. Pp. 1–665. \$45.00.

Scholars of Iroquoian languages have always been irresistibly drawn toward producing dictionaries. Early works, such as Bruyas (1862 [1970]) and Cuoq (1882) for Mohawk, Sagard (1632) for Huron, Shea (1860 [1970]) and Horsford (1887 [1982]) for Onondaga, are valuable sources of lexical material and often also ethnographic information. More recent dictionaries include Chafe (1967), G. Michelson (1973; 1996), and Rudes (1987). There also exist several dictionaries compiled primarily by or for speakers, such as E. Antone (1982), A. Antone et al. (1981), Maracle (1985), Mithun (1977), and Chafe (1983). These are based on an organization which reflects certain needs or preferences by speakers. The work under review represents an outstanding addition to the resources on Iroquoian.<sup>1</sup>

The *Dictionary* is based on Clifford Abbott's intensive work on Oneida, research which has spanned two decades. A significant portion of the data is drawn from texts that were written down by about a dozen native speakers of Oneida as part of a WPA project directed by Floyd Lounsbury in 1939–40 at the Oneida Reservation near Green Bay, Wisconsin. Much more lexical material has been added to this

<sup>1</sup>I am grateful to Clifford Abbott, Michael K. Foster, Gunther Michelson, and Hanni Woodbury for comments on a draft of this review.